

LANDMARKS

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DC INVENTORY EXPANDS WITH MODERN-ERA DESIGNATIONS

by Kim Williams



At its June hearing, the DC Historic Preservation Review Board approved the landmark designations of two modern-era federal government office buildings, the U.S. Tax Court and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The U.S. Tax Court Building, designed by architect Victor Lundy in 1965 and constructed in 1974, is a striking and highly sculptural example of mid-century Modernist architecture that has been hailed for its innovative and structurally advanced design. Completed in 1968, the HUD building is the design product of world renowned architect Marcel Breuer. The HUD building is a premier example of Breuer's Expressionist style of architecture and is one of

just two buildings designed by Breuer in Washington DC.

The Tax Court and HUD buildings were two of the first buildings to be constructed after implementation of a sweeping initiative introduced by John F. Kennedy to improve the design of the country's federal architecture. In 1961, Kennedy, who had concerns about the declining condition of Washington's federal buildings, established the Committee on Federal Office Space to study the problem. In 1962, the committee presented a final report that included the "Guiding Principles for Federal Architecture" authored principally by Daniel Patrick Moynihan (then Kennedy's Assistant Secretary of Labor). These "Guiding Principles" embodied a three-point architectural policy that encouraged federal design to convey the "dignity, enterprise, vigor, and stability of the American government." The Principles further recommended that all new federal office buildings "should incorporate the finest in contemporary architectural thought."

During the mid-1960s, GSA administrators took the "Guiding Principles" seriously, and for the first of its new buildings turned to acknowledged masters of architecture. Walter Gropius designed The John F. Kennedy Federal Building in Boston (1967); Ludwig Mies van der Rohe designed the Chicago Federal Center (1964-1969); and here in Washington, Breuer designed the HUD building and Lundy the Tax Court. Indeed, all of these buildings capture the contemporary ideal espoused in the "Guiding Principles."

Both of the DC landmark nominations, along with accompanying National Register nominations, were prepared by the General Services Administration Preservation Services Division. The listing of these two buildings is

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Photo Credit: HPO



Photo Credit: HPO

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Building top (Marcel Breuer, 1968) and the U.S. Tax Court Building, bottom (Victor Lundy, 1974), two mid-century Modernist structures, were added to the DC Inventory of Historic Sites in June.

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THE HPO HIRES NEW STAFF

Recent staff additions at the Historic Preservation Office have helped the office cope with new historic districts and the historic homeowner grant program as well as tackle a backlog of work. We wholeheartedly welcome our new staff.

Michael Beidler is an architect specializing in technical and preservation design assistance to property owners in historic districts. He has primary responsibility for review of projects in Dupont Circle, Strivers' Section, and 16th Street. Prior to joining the HPO, Michael was founding principal of Trout Design Studio, Inc., a full service architectural and interior design firm in the District rooted in historic preservation and adaptive rehabilitation. He also brings to the HPO a breadth of community-based organizational experience as past president of the Dupont Circle Citizens Association and the Dupont Circle Conservancy, and as a board member of numerous community-based organizations. Michael has a B.A. in Architecture from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (1982).

Joyetta Delaney is the Staff Assistant for the Office of Planning's Historic Preservation Office and Development Review Division. She previously worked as the Executive Assistant to the Deputy Director of the International County Management Association and as the Executive Assistant to the Principal at the Duke Ellington School of the Arts. Joyetta is a native Washingtonian; she and her family live in the U Street Historic District.

Chandra Harris serves as Assistant Archaeologist for the Historic Preservation Office. Her responsibilities include updating archaeological site forms, automating information management systems, and assessing the size and condition of the District's archaeological collections. Previously, she was involved in several research projects including the Maax' Na Archaeological Project in Rio Bravo, Belize, and the Warrior Project, an archaeological exploration of the interaction between members of the 10th Calvary (Buffalo Soldiers) and Mescalero Apache in the Guadalupe Mountains of Texas. Chandra was also a member of the Howard University team that received the 2007 Mayor's Award for Historic Preservation for the Colored Benevolent Union/Quaker Burial Ground Cemetery project. She is currently interning with the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology/National Museum of Health and Medicine. She earned a B.A. in Anthropology with a concentration in Archaeology and Physical Anthropology from Howard University (2006) and a Masters in Forensic Archaeology from the University College of London (2007).

Andrew Lewis is a senior preservation specialist for the Historic Preservation Office. He

brings more than a decade of experience in reviewing projects under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and related state and federal laws, regulations and policies. His substantial experience comes through prior employment with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Maryland Historical Trust, and the Department of the Navy's Cultural Resources Program. He also gained preservation-related experience during his tenure with the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Florida SHPO. Mr. Lewis holds an M.S. in Urban and Regional Planning from Florida State University (1991) and a B.A. in History from the University of Florida (1988).

Amanda Molson serves as a preservation specialist for the HPO with primary responsibility for project review in Capitol Hill. She works with property owners and other permit applicants to explain HPO guidelines, standards and procedures in the review of building permit applications for repairs, in-kind replacement and alterations to historic properties. Prior to joining our staff, she was employed by the United States Congress, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Office and the National Park Service. Amanda has a B.A. in Psychology from Wake Forest University (1999), and is currently completing her degree requirements for an M.A. in Historic Preservation from Goucher College. She is a native Washingtonian who has lived on Capitol Hill all of her life.

Eldra D. Walker, a preservation specialist, reviews projects in Shaw, Blagden Alley, and LeDroit Park. She also helps provide outreach and education to communities and residents throughout the city on matters related to historic preservation and neighborhood history, and conducts inspections and project tracking for the HP enforcement program. Prior to joining the HPO, Eldra worked for the National Park Service and the Bureau of Labor Statistics. She has a B.S. in Information Systems from Morgan State University (2001) and an M.S. in Historic Preservation from the University of Pennsylvania (2007). ♦



New members of the Historic Preservation Staff are: front (l-r) Joyetta Delaney, Chandra Harris, and Amanda Molson. Rear, Michael Beidler, Andrew Lewis, and Eldra Walker.

Photo Credit: HPO

COMMUNITY OUTREACH UPDATE

by Patsy Fletcher

The DCommunity Heritage project (DCCHP) is housed at the Humanities Council of Washington, DC but funded in large part by the Historic Preservation Office. In its continuing effort to reach and encourage DC communities to protect and preserve their historic and cultural resources, the DCCHP has awarded grants to the following groups and projects:



Patsy Fletcher,
Community Outreach
Coordinator.

Photo Credit: HPO

Adams Morgan Main Street: a handbook of design and preservation guidelines for Adams Morgan businesses and property owners.

Radio Rootz DC: a youth developed audio walking tour project examining present-day U Street in relation to the civil disturbances of 40 years ago.

The Emergence Community Arts

Collective: a history project in the Georgia Avenue/Pleasant Plains Community for summer camp students ages 5-12.

Potomac River Jazz Club: a continuation of "The Bayou" project, a documentary on the history of the legendary DC nightclub.

Chinatown Community Cultural Center: initial phase of Chinatown Heritage Preservation Project.

Tenleytown Historical Society: development of a multi-property documentation of early American University Park houses.

Takoma Theatre Conservancy: survey of residents for memories of the historic Takoma Theater as part of a larger theater preservation project.

Woodridge Civic Association: production of a brochure highlighting significant historic places in Woodridge.

Youth Crime Watch of the Mid-Atlantic: a student-directed history project aimed at promoting two key neighborhoods in Wards 5 and 6, and decreasing youth rivalries between the communities.

Empower DC: continuation of an oral history project documenting the unique and important history of the Ivy City community.

National Association for Olmstead Parks: development of an interpretive brochure outlining the history and significance of Olmstead design features on the US Capitol grounds.

Fiesta DC: production of a guide on Latino Folk Artists in the District of Columbia as part of a Latino cultural guide.

Capitol Hill Cluster School: completion of the final phase of a resource library project to collect and preserve the history of the Stuart Hobson Middle School.

Eastland Gardens Flower Club: development of a brochure highlighting the architectural history of the Eastland Gardens community.

Ward 7 Business and Professional

Association: development of an oral history and video documentary of the history of businesses and business associations in Ward 7.

Main Street Anacostia: development of a coloring book highlighting individuals and sites central to the development of Anacostia.

Building Bridges Across the River (THE ARC): enhancement of an educational outreach program focusing on Anacostia's most historic resident, Frederick Douglass.

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Modern-Era continued from page 1

the first phase of a two-year project by the General Services Administration to have 170 of its historic buildings formally recognized and listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The U.S. Tax Court and HUD buildings have been further classified as two of a select group of four GSA buildings considered to be the agency's most important Modern-era federal buildings in its inventory. Through listing in the National Register of Historic Places, GSA hopes to heighten awareness of its Modern-era federal buildings, emphasize the high quality of design in its federal building stock, and gain the highest level of preservation protection for its historic buildings.

The nomination of these two buildings by GSA is well-timed and corresponds with an ongoing effort of the DC Historic Preservation Office to identify and protect its stock of mid-century Modern buildings. Robinson & Associates, a consultant to the HPO, is currently completing a multi-year study of Modernism in the District and will be submitting a final report to the HPO later this year. Based upon the findings of this study and recommendations made by the consultant, it is likely that the Historic Preservation Office will be seeking landmark designation of other eligible Modern-era buildings in the near future. ❖

HOMEOWNER GRANT PROGRAM UPDATE

At a press conference on April 15, Mayor Adrian Fenty proudly announced the first Homeowner Grant in the Anacostia Historic District at the home of Clarence and Twyla Alston of 1320 Valley Place, SE (top photo). Over \$893,000 was awarded to 50 recipients in the initial grant round of the program. Four months later, the Alston residence has lost its Insulbrick siding and regained exterior window trim as grant-funded work progresses (bottom photo).

More information on the Homeowner Grant program can be found under the Financial Incentives and Resources section of the Historic Preservation Office website at planning.dc.gov/hp. The next grant deadline is December 1, 2008. ❖



Photo Credit: HPO



Photo Credit: HPO

NEW DC HISTORIC DESIGNATIONS

MARCH THROUGH JULY 2008

The following designations to the District of Columbia Inventory of Historic Sites have been approved by the Historic Preservation Review Board. All approved nominations will be forwarded to the National Park Service for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

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ARCHAEOLOGY UPDATE

by Ruth Troccoli, Ph.D

This summer, the Historic Preservation Office has worked closely with the Department of Parks and Recreation on projects to remediate erosion problems at Kalorama and Mitchell Parks. City Archaeologist Dr. Ruth Troccoli and Assistant Archaeologist Chandra Harris conducted archaeological testing at each park to ensure that erosion-arresting features will not disturb any intact archaeological remains.

Mitchell Park contains the foundation of the Anthony Holmead House which was built in 1795 and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places for its archaeological significance. Erosion is so severe at the park that about one foot of topsoil has been lost from the playing field area since it was resodded in 2001. Testing confirmed that there are no intact archaeological deposits in the area where new drains will be installed to help direct runoff to storm drains. Fill will be added to raise the ground surface and slow the flow of water across the playing field. Once new grass is established and healthy, the playing field will be vastly improved!

Kalorama Park contains the remains of an antebellum house used as a Civil War hospital. The edges of the park fall away steeply from a center plateau to the streets surrounding it on three sides. DPR is installing a bioswale on the steepest slope at the west side of the park to capture and slow the runoff's speed so it can be absorbed into the soil. Archaeological testing revealed that the ground has already been highly disturbed where the bioswale is planned so that no evidence of buried deposits remains.

The HPO and DPR will continue to work together to protect archaeological sites in DC parks while also making them better and safer places for recreation. ❖



Ruth Troccoli, Ph.D
Historic Preservation
Office Archaeologist.

Photo Credit: HPO

Community Outreach Update page 3

Committee of 100 on the Federal City: contribution to the publication *Housing Washington: Two Centuries of Tradition and Innovation*, an anthology on the development of residential buildings in Washington, D.C. during the last two centuries.

All projects are to be completed by the end of October 2008. The products will be showcased the DCCHP's December 6, 2008 symposium. Mark your calendars! ❖

Historic Designations continued from page 3

The Waffle Shop (including interior)

522 10th Street, NW

Designated March 27, 2008

Sponsors: Art Deco Society of Washington, DC, The Committee of 100 on the Federal City, City/Downtown Artists Coalition and Recent Past Preservation Network

Tenleytown Multiple-Property Thematic Document

Tenleytown in Washington, D.C.: Historic and Architectural Resources, ca. 1770-1941

Designated April 24, 2008

Sponsors: Tenleytown Historical Society and the DC Historic Preservation Office

Eldbrooke United Methodist Church

4100 River Road, NW

Designated April 24, 2008

Sponsor: Tenleytown Historical Society

The Methodist Cemetery

Murdock Mill Road, NW

Designation April 24, 2008

Sponsor: Tenleytown Historical Society

William L. Slayton House (including interior)

3411 Ordway Street, NW

Designated May 22, 2008

Sponsors: Danny D. Snyder and Thomas E. Breit

Western Union Telegraph Company Tenley Site

4623 41st Street, NW

Designated May 22, 2008

Sponsor: Tenleytown Historical Society

George M. Barker Company Warehouse

1525 7th Street, NW

Designated May 22, 2008

Sponsors: Bread for the City and the DC Preservation League

The Strand Theater

5129-31 Nannie Helen Burroughs Avenue, NE

Designated June 26, 2008

Sponsors: ANC 7C and the DC Preservation League

The United States Tax Court

400 2nd Street, NW

Designated June 26, 2008

Sponsor: General Services Administration

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

451 7th Street, SW

Designated June 26, 2008

Sponsor: General Services Administration

Washington Hilton Hotel

1919 Connecticut Avenue, NW

Designated July 24, 2008

Sponsor: C.J.U. F. II Destination Hotel LLC

2009 ANNUAL WORK PLAN PREPARATION UNDERWAY

Under the National Historic Preservation Act, the DC State Historic Preservation Office prepares an annual work plan to guide the HPO in meeting its federal program goals and objectives. A draft of the work plan will be distributed in August, posted on our website, and publicly noticed in advance of a public hearing by the Historic Preservation Review Board on September 25, 2008. The current 2008 Work Plan is posted on the website at planning.dc.gov/hp. Select Brochures and Publications, then HPO Guides, Reports and Publications. ❖

2007 ANNUAL REPORT AVAILABLE

The 2007 Historic Preservation Office Annual Report was transmitted to members of the Council of the District of Columbia in late Spring. The report outlines the activities and accomplishments of the office for the 2007 fiscal year of October 1, 2006 through September 30, 2007. A copy of the 30-page report is accessible on the Historic Preservation Office website at planning.dc.gov/hp. Please select Brochures and Publications, then Annual Reports. ❖

SUMMER INTERNS JOIN HPO

The HPO was fortunate to have the help of seven District high school students from the 2008 Summer Youth Program for a period of ten weeks this summer. The interns have assisted the Historic Preservation staff complete a variety of long overdue tasks including creating an inventory of our library collection, scanning maps, helping with a variety of archaeology projects as well as general office projects and activities. Taking part in the summer work program were Brenda Bell, Tairese Brown, Issa Ford, Deneen Phillips, Anthony Torrence, Demetrius Weir, and Devontre Weir. ❖

